



Copulas: Universals in the Categorization of the Lexicon (Oxford Studies in Typology and Linguistic Theory)

Regina Pustet

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Copulas (in English, the verb to be) are conventionally defined functionally as a means of relating elements of clause structure, especially subject and complement, and considered to be semantically empty or meaningless. Dr Pustet presents an analysis of grammatical descriptions of over 160 languages drawn from the language families of the world. She shows that some languages have a single copula, others several, and some none at all. She links the distribution of copulas to variations in lexical categorization and syntactic structure. She advances a comprehensive theory of copularization which she relates to language classification and to theories of language change, notably grammaticalization.

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